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Near East and South Asia Review

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Supplement
15 February 1985

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NESA NESAR 85-005.IX

15 February 1985

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	The current high level of attacks against Israeli troops in southern Lebanon will continue throughout the three-stage Israeli withdrawal from the area, as South Lebanon's Shias have been radicalized by the Israeli occupation since 1982 and have become an even more potent enemy than the Palestinians.		25X1
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	January 1985 was one of the most active Januaries in recent years in the war in Afghanistan as the Soviets and the Afghan regime launched multibattalion operations and initiated small-unit actions and the insurgents maintained pressure on regime garrisons.		25X1
	<i>Some articles are preliminary views of a subject or speculative, but the contents normally will be coordinated as appropriate with other offices within CIA. Occasionally an article will represent the views of a single analyst; these items will be designated as noncoordinated views. Comments may be directed to the authors.</i>		25X1

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Articles

Lebanon: Continuing Attacks on Israeli Forces in the South

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We believe the current high level of attacks against Israeli troops in southern Lebanon will continue throughout the three-stage Israeli withdrawal from the area. The source of these attacks is primarily Shia Muslims from the south and not Palestinians, although the Shias draw on radical Palestinian groups for advice and technical assistance. Ironically, Israel's war in Lebanon succeeded in its objective of removing the Palestinian threat to northern Israel, but it created a new and perhaps more potent enemy—South Lebanon's Shias.

After Israeli forces withdraw, Shias associated with the Amal organization probably will seek to consolidate a Shia canton in the south. Fundamentalist Shias will also attempt to establish bases in southern Lebanon. The fundamentalists almost certainly will attempt cross-border operations into Israel.

Syria will not clamp down on violence in the south before the Israeli withdrawal is completed, and Syrian influence in the south will probably remain tenuous even after the withdrawal. President Assad undoubtedly hopes to eliminate any residual Israeli presence in the south. He will probably give limited support to guerrilla attacks across the border while avoiding support for an extensive guerrilla campaign that would invite Israeli retaliation.

Growth of Shia Hostility

The Lebanese Shia community has become increasingly politicized over the last decade. Imam Musa Sadr, a relative of Ayatollah Khomeini, established Amal as a Shia political organization in the 1970s before his disappearance in Libya in 1978.

The Iranian revolution in 1979 provided an example of successful Shia political action as well as demonstrating the strength of an Islamic fundamentalist movement. The Israeli invasion of 1982, initially welcomed by the Shia community in the south, eventually produced resentment and increased Shia resistance to the Israeli occupation.

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Stringent Israeli controls on traffic between southern Lebanon and the rest of the country, established because of attacks on Israeli forces, have ruined the local economy. Transport costs are up, shops cannot maintain stocks, and fruits and vegetables, which account for as much as half of local income, often rot in transit before being cleared past Israeli checkpoints. The US Embassy in Beirut reports that popular resentment of the Israelis has become almost universal in the south, with large numbers of Shia civilians participating during the past year in demonstrations and strikes against the Israeli occupation.

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Growing splits between the Amal organization and Shia fundamentalists have forced the Amal leadership to use increasingly militant rhetoric to preserve their broad appeal in the Shia community. The head of the Amal organization, Nabih Barri, is now one of the most outspoken Lebanese critics of Israel.

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the rate of attacks on Israeli troops has quadrupled since January to an average of seven a day. Most of these attacks are made by Shia Muslims loosely associated with the Amal organization. The main Amal organization does not effectively control Shia terrorist operations in the south, however, and many

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Israel's Planned Three-Phase Withdrawal From Southern Lebanon



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of the attacks result from the initiative of increasingly militant local Amal leaders. [REDACTED]

Another effect of the Israeli invasion and subsequent occupation of the south was to give the fundamentalist fringe of the Shia community a rallying point and objective. The fundamentalists, inspired by the Iranian revolution in 1979, have exploited the Israeli occupation to win popular support. They have dedicated their network of loosely organized groups, referred to as the Hizballah (Party of God), to forcing the Israelis out of Lebanon, removing Western and non-Islamic influences, and establishing an Islamic republic in Lebanon. [REDACTED]

Fundamentalist Shia opposition goes beyond resisting the Israeli presence in southern Lebanon. The fundamentalists believe that their proximity to Israel gives them a unique role for spearheading the Muslim struggle as Islamic warriors against Zionism. [REDACTED]

Amal and Continued Action Against the Israeli Forces

We believe Amal fighters will continue to attack Israeli forces and surrogates in Lebanon throughout the withdrawal, although the Amal leadership will probably not attempt to carry their fight into Israel. Amal's efforts after the Israeli withdrawal probably will focus on consolidating control of a Shia canton including West Beirut, its southern suburbs, and South Lebanon. We believe Amal will become the dominant force in the south, but its loose control will be exploited by fundamentalists and Palestinians seeking to carry out limited attacks against Israel. Some Amal fighters in the south may join fundamentalist ranks. [REDACTED]

The Israelis and their surrogate, the Army of South Lebanon, will be prime targets for militant Lebanese and Palestinians, as will Lebanese collaborators with the Israelis. At least 12 Lebanese collaborators have been killed in southern Lebanon since December, and increased revenge attacks are expected to follow each stage of the Israeli pullback. [REDACTED]

The Radical Shia Threat

We believe the radical Hizballah network will try to establish a base in the south for the spread of their

religious movement. The Hizballah is incapable of gaining military control of the south, having fewer fighters and resources than Amal, although their hit-and-run tactics will give them an effective means of provoking violence there. The largely Shia population of southern Lebanon provides the fundamentalist movement a large pool of local recruits who would be difficult to isolate or eliminate. [REDACTED]

Fundamentalist Shias will almost certainly attempt cross-border operations into Israel after the Israeli withdrawal. Iranian Revolutionary Guards have been training radical Lebanese in the Bekaa Valley since 1982, and Palestinian extremist groups provide assistance and technical training to some Shia radicals. If radical Shia fighters can obtain artillery and rockets capable of reaching Israeli civilian targets from within Lebanon, they could eventually present a limited military threat to northern Israel similar to that posed by Palestinian guerrillas before the 1982 invasion. Cross-border operations by Hizballah fighters will probably not succeed, although even failed attempts will have psychological and propaganda value in the militant Shia community. [REDACTED]

Lebanese Internal Security and Anti-Israeli Attacks

Factional fighting around Sidon after the Israeli withdrawal could temporarily reduce the level of anti-Israeli attacks during the second and third phases of the pullback. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] After the Israeli withdrawal, a contest among the Lebanese and Palestinian factions for control of the vacated areas will almost certainly occur. [REDACTED]

The Lebanese Government deployed troops down the coastal highway before the Israeli pullback, but it

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probably cannot prevent or control an outbreak of factional fighting in the south. The Lebanese armed forces are weakened by materiel shortages and by confessional divisions among the troops, and their ability to act effectively in combat, especially against coreligionists, is doubtful. [REDACTED]

Syrian Acceptance of Violence in South Lebanon

Syrian President Assad is determined to force a total Israeli withdrawal and be seen in the Arab world as successfully confronting Israel. Assad wants Syria to appear to have forced Israel out of Lebanon, and Damascus is willing to support radical Shia terrorist activities in South Lebanon as an element of the "national resistance" to the Israeli presence despite the long-term challenge to Syrian interests posed by Shia extremism. In effect, Damascus has chosen the dangers of continued instability and conflict in the south rather than any measure that would reduce anti-Israeli attacks. [REDACTED]

The Syrians are unlikely to dampen violence in the south until after the Israelis have withdrawn. Damascus will probably support any Shia canton that is established in the south, seeing this as a means of extending Syrian influence in the area, increasing Syrian support of the Shias, and possibly gaining some influence among the fundamentalists who have thus far turned to Tehran for aid. Syria will also probably give limited support to guerrilla attacks across the border into Israel, although this support will be limited by Syrian reluctance to invite Israeli retaliation by openly backing an extensive guerrilla campaign. [REDACTED]

Prospects

We believe that attacks on Israeli forces and on Israeli surrogates and collaborators will continue at a high level throughout the withdrawal. The Lebanese Government will be powerless either to prevent these attacks or to fill the power vacuum. The Government of Israel has made clear that Israeli troops will not interfere in fighting in Lebanon between Lebanese or Palestinian factions following the Israeli pullback, leaving such internal fighting the responsibility of the Lebanese Government. Attacks by Lebanese or Palestinian fighters on Israeli troops in Lebanon or on targets in Israel, however, will be met with strong and immediate Israeli retaliation. [REDACTED]

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Afghanistan in January

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January 1985 was one of the most active Januaries in recent years in the war in Afghanistan. The Soviets and the Afghan regime launched multibattalion operations and initiated small-unit actions in the Herat, Qandahar, and Bagram areas and in Konarha and Paktia Provinces. The insurgents maintained pressure on regime garrisons in the east and in Qandahar. Fighting continued in the Panjsher Valley, and the Soviets may again be planning to assault insurgent strongholds there.

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Military Activity

Bad weather failed to significantly suppress combat in January. The Soviets continued to rely on multibattalion operations but also increased small-unit actions and ambushes—some conducted by special-purpose forces (*Spetznaz*) in support of other troops. The insurgents were active in several areas:

- US Embassy sources report heavy fighting in the Herat area in early January, and Soviet and Afghan forces were again preparing for combat there late in the month.
- Activity remained high in the Qandahar area, with insurgent attacks against the airport, Soviet and Afghan posts, and a Soviet military convoy and daily skirmishes in the bazaar. The Soviets responded by bombing nearby villages. increased preparations for combat in the area.
- insurgent pressure in early January prevented Soviet and Afghan regime troops from establishing a series of posts on main supply lines between Ali Khel and Khowst in Paktia Province. A regiment-size Afghan regime force arrived near Ali Khel by late January.

- US Embassy sources report that the insurgents, taking advantage of a snowstorm that grounded Soviet aircraft, attacked Bagram Airbase on about 16 January and damaged some helicopters. The Soviets—most likely in response to the attack and to counter intense insurgent pressure in the Shomali area—launched a multibattalion operation that continued through late January.

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The Panjsher Valley

The Soviets and the Afghan regime continued to experience difficulties in maintaining forces in the Panjsher Valley. Guerrilla assaults on Soviet posts at Golbahar and Kohestan resulted in substantial Soviet casualties, according to US Embassy sources.

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the insurgents repeatedly overran small outposts in the valley, plundering arms but occupying the outposts only briefly. The guerrillas allow the Soviets and Afghans to recapture the posts and then repeat the cycle. In mid-January the guerrillas ignored bad weather and attacked an Afghan regime outpost at Khenj. evidence of heavy air or artillery strikes near Khenj—most likely the Soviet response to the insurgent attack—but guerrilla activity continued.

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The performance of Afghan regime troops did not improve in January. shortly after their arrival in the Panjsher, large

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numbers of regime soldiers and a high-ranking officer defected to the insurgents. [REDACTED]

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Violations of Iranian Airspace

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The Soviets apparently are frustrated with their progress in securing the Panjsher Valley and may be planning to launch a new offensive. [REDACTED]

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US Embassy

sources reported that large Soviet and Afghan regime convoys were moving north on the road from Kabul toward the Panjsher in late January. [REDACTED]

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Kabul

The regime tightened security in Kabul during the first weeks of January and was able to maintain relative quiet during the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The increased security and bad weather probably reduced the insurgents' willingness to stage many attacks on the capital. Guerrilla activity increased slightly late in the month, according to US Embassy sources, with sporadic rocket attacks on the city, the assassination of Babrak Karmal's barber, and the bombing of the Afghan military hospital. [REDACTED]

We believe most of the Soviet and Afghan regime aircraft probably overflowed Iranian territory in the context of operations close to the Afghan border. The Soviets and Afghans are concerned that the guerrillas are receiving arms via routes through Iran and using Iran as a sanctuary after operations in western Afghanistan. The incursions—which may have been in pursuit of insurgent forces—also underscore Soviet frustration with their inability to suppress the insurgents in the Herat area more than temporarily. [REDACTED]

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Outlook

We expect the level of combat to increase in the spring. Insurgents who left Afghanistan last fall for camps in Pakistan are likely to return when travel becomes easier. The Soviets probably will continue

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their efforts to block insurgents and supplies from Pakistan and may increase operations in the eastern provinces in expectation of renewed arms flows from Pakistan. The Soviets also appear to be preparing for increased small-unit operations and ambushes, using *Spetznaz* forces garrisoned at Jalalabad, Ghazni, Qandahar, and Bagram. Multibattalion operations in the eastern provinces also will continue. [REDACTED]

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Bad weather in February may slow a new Soviet assault against insurgents in the Panjsher Valley. The Soviets, however, probably will be willing to put up with logistic problems in the interest of what they hope will be a surprise attack. Because they already garrison several areas in the valley, they may decide to send a smaller number of motorized rifle troops to the area than in the spring 1984 offensive while relying more heavily on medium-to-low-level bombing and artillery to suppress the insurgents. We believe the Soviets—learning from small successes last spring—will also conduct a large number of heliborne assaults in hopes of finding Masood. [REDACTED]

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